

## Testimony in Support of HB 6637

An Act Establishing an Invasive Species Stamp for the Operation of a Motorboat on the Inland Waters of the State

Dear Co-Chairs Cohen and Demicco, Vice-Chairs Gresko and Kushner, Ranking Members Harding and Miner, and members of the Environment Committee:

As the Environmental Planner for the Town of Guilford, I'm writing to express my support for HB 6637, legislation that requires a person who registers a vessel or renews registration and who intends to operate or allow such vessel to be operated on the inland waters of the state to purchase an Invasive Species Stamp for five dollars for state residents and twenty five dollars for out of state residents. The fees from the purchase of the stamps would be deposited into the Connecticut Lakes and Ponds Preservation account.

The Town of Guilford has several lakes in town which have been infested by aquatic invasive species. The most popular of them is Lake Quonnipaug which is 99 acres in size. Lake Quonnipaug is one of the areas most utilized bodies of fresh water. The public beach is utilized by thousands of residents from both the town of Guilford and State of Connecticut. The state boat launch located on the north cove of the lake is used by a large number of boaters, kayakers and fishermen. The lake also is the training ground for crew teams from Guilford High School and Choate High School. Invasive species have choked the boat launch, degraded the public swimming area, hindered the crew teams and been a source of constant complaints. The aquatic invasive plants are getting caught in the motor of the boats and in the oars of the skiffs causing the plants to dislodge and spread. The invasive aquatics also get caught on boats and trailers when they exit the lake causing the spread of the invasive aquatic plants to other lakes.

Aquatic plant studies have been conducted on the lake since at least 1990 with the most recent one conducted by the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment in August 2018. The lake has four identified invasive aquatic plants consisting of curly leaf pondweed, Eurasian watermilfoil, fanwort, and variable watermilfoil. The reports have documented the spread of the aquatic Invasive plants across the lake and the decline of the native plants.

The Town of Guilford over the past several years has been conducting targeted treatments of the invasive aquatic plants in Lake Quonnipaug with a budget of \$20,000 to improve the ecological health of the lake and to provide a safe environment for recreational activities in the waters of the State of Connecticut. Grants from Connecticut Lakes and Ponds Preservation account would provide much needed assistance to towns like Guilford which are trying to contain the spread of Aquatic Invasive Plants.

Please support HB5254. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Kevin W. Magee  
Town of Guilford  
Environmental Planner